



Landscape Services

Safety Standard Operating Procedure

(Revised 1/2023)

Step Ladder Safety

This Standard Operating Procedure covers inspection and safety use of step ladder. As with any equipment or tools, the most basic premise for safe operation is reading and adhering to the manufacturer's instructions and warnings. This SSOP is not a substitute for the owner's manual produced by the manufacturer.

Schedule- TBD upon needs

PPE Required- Safety harness if over 4'.

Safety Requirements- Follow safety operations and inspection before use. Follow manufacture guidelines for stability and weight rating.

Tools/ materials- Proper ladder that meets the needs of the job.

Standard locations- Use in areas that cannot be reached by ground

FM Step Ladder Safety

By American Ladder Institute

Stepladders are commonly used in all industries, but they require careful use. They are not designed for any degree of side loading and are relatively easily overturned.

Stepladders range in size from 4 ft. to 20 ft. in length along the side rail. Stepladders shorter than 4 ft. are considered Step Stools. The highest standing level on a step ladder is slightly more than 2 ft. from the top of the ladder. The highest standing level is required to be marked on the specifications label on the side rail of the product. Therefore, when planning your job, the maximum work height is established by adding the user's height and reach to the highest standing level of the stepladder.

Proper Use

A Stepladder requires level ground support for all four of its side rails. If this work site condition does not exist, a stepladder should not be selected for the job.

A Stepladder must not be used unless its base is spread fully open and the Spreaders locked. Stepladders are not to be used as Single Ladders or in the partially open position.

In order to prevent tipping the ladder over sideways due to over-reaching, the user must climb or work with the body near the middle of the steps. The ladder should be set-up close to the work. Never attempt to move the ladder without first descending, relocating the ladder, and then re-climbing. Do not attempt to mount the ladder from the side or step from one ladder to another unless the ladder is secured against sideways motion.

In an effort to avoid losing your balance and falling off the stepladder, the user must not step or stand higher than the step indicated on the label marking the highest standing level. The user must also not step or stand on the Top Cap or bucket/pail shelf.

When ascending or descending the ladder, always face the ladder and maintain a firm hold. Do not attempt to carry other objects in your hand(s) while climbing.

The braces on the rear of a stepladder are not intended for climbing or standing and must not be used for that purpose. Note, however, that special stepladders are available with steps on both the front and rear and are intended for two users at the same time.

The anti-slip feet at the bottom of the stepladder side rails must be present and in good condition prior to using the ladder. The ladder must not be used on ice, snow or slippery surfaces unless suitable means to prevent slipping is employed.

A stepladder must never be placed upon other objects such as boxes, barrels, scaffolds, or other unstable bases in an effort to obtain additional height.

Proper Care

A thorough inspection must be made when the ladder is initially purchased and each time it is placed into service. Clean the climbing and gripping surfaces if they have been subjected to oil, grease, or



slippery materials. Working parts, bolts, rivets, step-to-side rail connections, and the condition of the anti-slip feet (safety shoes) shall be checked. If structural damage, missing parts, or any other hazardous defect is found, the ladder must not be placed into service and either discarded or competently repaired.

Ladders exposed to excessive heat, as in the case of fire, may have reduced strength. Similarly, ladders exposed to corrosive substances such as acids or alkali materials may experience chemical corrosion and a resulting reduction in strength. Remove these ladders from service.

Ladders with bent or broken side rails must be destroyed.

In the event a ladder is discarded, it must be destroyed in such a manner as to render it useless. Another person must not be afforded the opportunity to use a ladder that has been deemed unsafe.

When transporting ladders on vehicles equipped with ladder racks, the ladders must be properly supported. Overhang of the ladders beyond the support points of the rack should be minimized. The support points should be constructed of material such as wood or rubber-covered pipe to minimize the effects of vibration, chafing and road shock. Securing the ladder to each support point will greatly reduce the damaging effects of road shock.

Storage racks for ladders not in use should have sufficient supporting points to avoid sagging which can result in warping the ladder. Other materials must not be placed on the ladder while it is in storage.